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## **Goyer Happy to Bring Horror to Chicago**

Writer/director David S. Goyer liked Chicago so much while on set for “Batman Begins” and “The Dark Knight” he returned to direct his horror movie “The Unborn.”

He got more than he bargained for.

“We had an earthquake while we were filming an exorcism scene, which was awesome,” said Goyer during a recent set visit on Chicago’s Northwest Side.

“Unborn” stars Odette Yustman (“Cloverfield”) as a young woman haunted by her unborn twin and Gary Oldman (“Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban”) as a rabbi who tries to help her. In mid-April, while Goyer shot scenes of Oldman performing an exorcism, the crew got a surprise.

“We were filming all night... We have chandeliers and things shaking and wind. We actually have this shaker device: The lead character is strapped into a gurney, and it starts vibrating,” Goyer remembers. “So, we’re doing all that, and we stop filming - and then things are still shaking.”

Goyer, who shares story credits on Christopher Nolan’s lauded Batman films, also wrote screenplays for “Dark City,” “Jumper” and the “Blade” trilogy, for which he directed the final installment. For Goyer, an Ann Arbor, Michigan native, “Unborn” was a chance to return to the Midwest. The production, which started March 5 and wrapped up principal photography Monday, filmed on location in Chicago’s Sound-Bar nightclub, on Wacker Drive, on Loyola University’s Roger’s Park campus and in Kankakee’s Shapiro Developmental Center.

Goyer shot in a shuttered wing of the former asylum, which provided its own set of challenges.

“That was possibly the most unpleasant place I’ve ever filmed,” Goyer says. “There was no heat; the place was really dusty. It had been sealed off for I don’t know how many decades.”

When the crew first arrived, “there was about 2 inches of raccoon feces everywhere,” Goyer says. Asbestos had to be removed, as well as lead paint.

“It was filthy. You’d come home at night and black tar would come out of your nose. You can’t get that in L.A. It’s the best,” Goyer jokes.

Goyer came up with the idea for “The Unborn” in Chicago while visiting his wife, Jessika Borsiczky Goyer, who was producing Steven Conrad’s forthcoming comedy, “The Promotion.”

“The other thing that was driving it was, there are two or three A-level crews in Chicago,” Goyer says. “And once I learned that we could get one of the better crews, I told Universal I wanted to lock in Chicago. In fact, I committed to Chicago without even scouting locations, because I’d been here so much.”

While here, Goyer visited the Lincoln Park Zoo, a favorite childhood destination, and the restaurant Avec. It also gave Goyer a chance to connect with Chicago artist Tony Fitzpatrick.

“I’ve hung out in his studio a couple times, and his studio has sorta been a haven for me,” Goyer says. “Chicago had everything I needed. It was where I wanted to go.”

“The Unborn” is slated for a 2009 release.